

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/SENSITIVE

April 9, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT:

Exploitation of Tensions in the Soviet Union
and Eastern Europe

Attached is an excellent CIA paper describing covert action programs being undertaken to exploit tensions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and identifying activities which may be emphasized in the future. In assessing Soviet vulnerabilities the report notes that:

- Although the internal dissident is not likely to significantly influence Soviet society in the short term, existing trends toward more active dissidence could be affected by external developments. The discrediting of the regime by a serious economic crisis or another Czech-type crisis might promote radical changes in the internal political climate.
- Suppression of the growing intellectual dissent by Soviet authorities has disillusioned many foreign Communists and Soviet sympathizers.
- Among the non-Russian minorities in the Soviet Union dissent is vocal and widespread.
- There is also increasing criticism of the Soviet economy.
- In Eastern Europe where the tensions are greater and the Western orientation much stronger the Soviets will have to rely on force to maintain hegemony.

There are numerous indications of the effectiveness of the program CIA conducts to capitalize on Soviet vulnerabilities:

- Radio Free Europe, which broadcasts to an Eastern European audience of over 30 million that swells dramatically during crises, is frequently denounced by Communist leaders. Czech Party Secretary Husak, for example, has blamed RFE for his party's inability to win over the Czech population.

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Radio Liberty which broadcasts to the Soviet Union has had a significant role in increasing manifestations of dissent and opposition among the Soviet intelligensia. Defectors have often commented on the significant impact of the broadcast of documents written by protesters.

-- The \$150 million spent annually by the Russians for jamming operations which are only marginally successful is indicative of the value of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty which cost less than [redacted] to operate.

-- Publication of smuggled manuscripts and magazines geared to the Eastern European audience and distribution of books not available in Communist countries have also made an impact. 25X1

Emphasis on the following activities is being considered in planning for future operations:

-- greater exploitation of dissent through modernized radio transmitting facilities, wider dissemination of criticism by the intellectuals, and stimulation of nationality aspirations among Soviet minorities;

-- attacks on Soviet activities outside the bloc and intensified exploitation of anti-Communist themes abroad; 25X1

-- developing leaders capable of providing a democratic alternative to Soviet-supported front organizations;

-- [redacted]

-- preparations for covert programs to offset the threat of Communist election victories in the Free World. [redacted]

Attachment

K. ① I believe we need a more aggressive program in this area.

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② give me recommendations on how we can increase exchange of lesser types (with less risk) what [redacted] can do - (including of course soon [redacted] of the program in this paper)

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TENSIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

Introduction

At no time in the history of the Soviet Union to date have political forces outside the Communist Party leadership played a significant role in influencing events. The Party apparatus, the KGB and the deeply vested interests of the Soviet State hierarchy are experienced in coping with dissidence of all types, and have an impressive record of asserting their will at any cost to the rest of society. The KGB in particular has an almost perfect record of successful penetration, manipulation and suppression of opposition elements. In addition there is an historic tradition of public apathy, largely unchanged even today among the workers and peasants of Russia, and dissident elements find little encouragement at the grass roots. The authorities have often exploited the antipathy of the working class toward the intelligentsia in suppressing incipient demonstrations.

Thus the experience of Russian history strongly argues against the proposition that the internal dissident will significantly influence Soviet society in the short term. The conditions, nevertheless, which abet existing trends toward more active and articulate dissidence could be affected by external developments. A discrediting of the regime by, say, another Czechoslovak crisis or a serious economic crisis, might well promote radical changes in the internal political climate. The paragraphs that follow should be considered in this light.

Intellectual Dissent

To describe the nature and scope of dissidence in the Soviet Union today poses the risk of over-emphasis. The Soviet regime is by no means on the brink of collapse. On the other hand, something new has indeed emerged in Soviet society since Stalin's death. The growing demand for freedom of expression has been widely reported in the Western press, and its suppression by Soviet authorities has in turn contributed to disillusionment among foreign Communists and Soviet sympathizers.

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Beyond the circle of leading scientists and writers there are the active dissidents themselves. Most of them are younger members of the intelligentsia, but their ranks also include workers, teachers, and other professionals.



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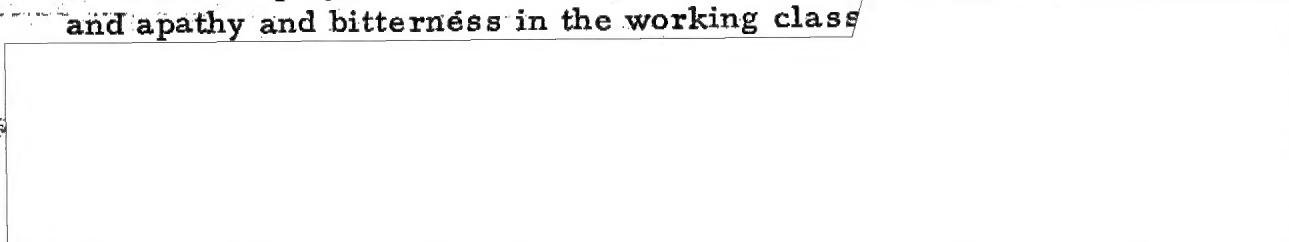
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The picture of the Soviet Union that these defectors paint is one of increasing cynicism and alienation on the part of the intelligentsia, and apathy and bitterness in the working class



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Minority Repression

Among many of the non-Russian minorities in the Soviet Union, dissent is vocal and widespread. It is also vigorously repressed. In the Ukraine, the arrests of hundreds of Ukrainian dissidents in 1965 and 1966, and subsequent repressions, have been vigorously protested by leading Ukrainian scientists, artists, and writers,

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The contempt of the Baltic people for Soviet rule remains as strong as ever. It is no longer expressed in hopeless armed resistance, as it was twenty years ago. Instead, these small nations manifest a vigorous determination to preserve their national cultures. Even the local Communist Party apparatus has sought to assert a degree of autonomy. In Estonia many works of Western literature that have never been published in Russian are printed in the native language. Two of the major underground documents recently proposing alternatives to the Communist dictatorship originated in Estonia.

Economic Unrest

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Since the December 1969 Central Committee Plenum, the Soviet press has given increasing attention to the lethargy of the economy. The best informed defectors and even Soviet economists depict the economy as suffering from overcentralization, rigid control, and a system of falsification and misrepresentation that prevents anyone from knowing what the true conditions are.

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Eastern Europe

In addition to its domestic problems, the Soviet Union has had a chronic difficulty in managing its satellites in Eastern Europe. In Eastern Europe the tensions in society are much greater than in the Soviet Union, the Western orientation much stronger, and the possibility exists that at some future time one or more of these countries may successfully make the transition that Czechoslovakia essayed in 1968. It seems inevitable that, as long as the Soviet Union maintains its current system, it will be impossible for the peoples of Eastern Europe to live in real harmony with the Soviet Union and that, to maintain hegemony in the area, the Soviets will have to continue to rely upon force.

Dissident elements in the USSR and Eastern Europe display remarkable sympathy and understanding for their fellows throughout the Soviet dominated region.

Others

protested the biased reporting in the Soviet press and Soviet threats before the troops moved in. Intellectuals in all Eastern European countries have actively collaborated with the Soviet dissidents, and have expressed their sympathy for those arrested and imprisoned.

With its easier access to the West, Eastern Europe acts as a conduit for books, letters, manuscripts and ideas. The flow back and forth across the Soviet borders is relatively easy and constant.

The fact that Eastern European standards of tolerance and freedom of expression, although restrictive, are well above the levels permitted in the Soviet Union makes the region's ability to influence the Soviet Union a consideration of major importance to the United States.

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Radio Broadcasts

Free Europe, Inc., and Radio Liberty Committee, Inc., were organized in 1949 and 1951 respectively by the CIA. The major activity of each operation is radio broadcasting. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty programming centers are located in

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Radio Free Europe (RFE)

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The radio has achieved a high degree of Eastern European listener acceptance as a station which identifies with their needs, thoughts and aspirations. It is estimated that over [redacted] people listen to RFE broadcasts. This percentage rises dramatically during periods of international crisis. RFE is denounced almost daily by Communist media, and on occasion by key figures of the Eastern European governments. Czechoslovak Party Secretary Husak has publicly placed a large share of the blame on RFE for his Party's inability to win over the Czechoslovak population.

The station is a political force with which the Eastern European regimes must reckon. The reason for this lies partly in RFE's pattern of cross-reporting--i. e., reporting in detail to all the Eastern European countries on domestic developments in the individual countries. This is in effect the principal way the peoples of the area learn of significant developments in their own and neighboring countries. It can be demonstrated that RFE's repeated exposure of domestic policies and methods has forced modification of censorship and similar restrictions in several of the Eastern European countries.

RFE's role in the 1968 Czechoslovak crisis is a striking example of the radio's effectiveness. Prior to the ousting of Party First

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Secretary Novotny in January 1968, RFE was the chief source of factual information and research analysis on domestic affairs for much of the Czechoslovak population. After the Soviet invasion and the loss of their new-found freedom, the Czechoslovak people again became dependent on the round-the-clock reporting of RFE. Audience research indicates that RFE's listenership

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rose to [redacted] of the population. The station received

[redacted] of letters extolling its programs, while the Communist

news media unleashed an unprecedented series of attacks on RFE.

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The Soviet journal Red Star described the radio as the "most strategic weapon in the global psychological war being carried on by the United States against the world socialist system."

Radio Liberty (RL)

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in the RFE [redacted]

clock [redacted]

. In contrast to RFE, RL is targeted against the more restrictive Soviet system. Effectiveness is more difficult to measure. However, letters from listeners, defector reports and [redacted] indicate that there is a sizeable audience. It is generally agreed that RL merits a significant share of the credit for the increasing manifestations of dissent and opposition among the Soviet intelligentsia.

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Communist Attacks on the Radios

Soviet and Eastern European attempts to discredit RFE and

RL are intensive and coordinated. The Communist regimes are particularly discomfited by the two radios' detailed news coverage and highly effective cross-reporting of internal developments, and by their exploitation of intellectual ferment, nationalist tendencies and general dissent within the Soviet Union.

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A measure of the Soviet concern over Western broadcasts is the extent of the Soviet jamming effort. At this time, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria also extensively jam RFE broadcasts. According to a VOA study, the Soviets use 2,000 - 2,500 jammers at an estimated annual cost of \$150,000,000. As indicated above, however, the jamming is marginally effective inasmuch as the target audiences hear the radios on one or more frequencies. The cost of the Soviet jamming effort can be put into perspective by comparing it with the annual operating costs of FE, Inc., and RLC, Inc. [redacted] and [redacted] respectively. The radios represent a 20-year investment of over [redacted]

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and RLC, Inc.

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Coordination and Interrelation of Programs

Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty and the other organizations and programs mentioned above reinforce each other's activities in many ways, significantly enhancing the effectiveness of the overall effort. In the ecology of dissidence in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, political organizations such as the NTS and Prolog make contact through Western European travelers with the dissenters inside. Through these contacts and other means documents of protest, suppressed novels and similar material are brought out to the West. They are published in the original language and then broadcast by Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe back to the East, thus vastly magnifying the audience for the original protest documents and in turn stimulating further dissidence. Through the far-flung contacts of the radios and other CIA instrumentalities the publications are distributed to travelers from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe discreetly and cheaply. Czech and Polish distributors enlist their compatriots to carry back Russian volumes to Poland and Czechoslovakia for shipment onward. Few East Europeans need to be told that the future of their own countries depends in large measure upon developments in Moscow.

In this system of interlocking organizations and people, a vital role is also played by overt government media such as the Voice of America and [redacted]. Their role is of course different from that of the covertly sponsored media, and in recent years the two have worked harmoniously in tandem to reinforce their respective efforts.

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Planning for the Future

Given the necessary policy approvals and budgetary resources, we propose a number of additional courses of covert action, aimed not only at the USSR itself, but also at Soviet presence and influence outside the Bloc. Most of these can be undertaken with existing assets. In some instances it will be necessary to create new ones, necessarily, t

Exploitation of Internal Dissent

First, we propose modernization of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. Spectrum interference (including jamming) and channel congestion in the short and medium wave broadcasting modes have reached such serious proportions that higher power transmitters are needed to maintain an audible signal in the target area. The transmitting plants of both Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe are outmoded and under-powered. Both require augmentation and modernization to sustain their effectiveness in a field of friendly and hostile "super power" radio competitors. In addition, Radio Liberty needs new facilities to reach geographic areas of the USSR now only marginally covered. A minimum program of modernization, established by careful Agency review in cooperation with the Bureau of the Budget, calls for an outlay of [redacted]. This item was struck from CIA's FY 1971 budget; it will be included in the FY 1972 budget.

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